The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home

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The New Age.

WHEN navies are forgotten,
And fleets are useless things,
When the dove shall warm her bosom
Beneath the eagle's wing,—

When the memory of battles
At last is strange and old,
When nations have one banner
And creeds have found one fold,

When the Hand that sprinkles midnight
With its powdered drift of suns,
Has hushed the tiny tumult
Of sects and swords and guns,—

Then hate's last note of discord
In all God's worlds shall cease,
And the strenuous life mean service,
And the common goal be Peace!

All for God.

I ask not, take away this weight of care,
No, for that love I pray that all can bear;
And for the faith that whatsoe'er befall
Must needs be good, and for my profit prove,
Since from my Father's heart most rich in love,
And from His bounteous hands it cometh all.

I ask not that my course be calm and still;
No, here, too, Lord, be done Thy holy will.
I ask but for a quiet, childlike heart,
Though thronging cares and restless toil be mine,
Yet may my heart remain for ever Thine,
Draw it from earth, and fix it where Thou art.

CARL JOHANN PHILIP SPITTA.

The Liberal Movement in Religion.

(An Address given by the Rev. J. Wood, in the Church of the Maccabees, Geneva, on Sunday afternoon, August 27, 1905, being the Sunday before the International Congress of Liberal Protestants.)

Isaiah lx, 22. "*A little one shall become a thousand.*"

HE must be a creature of extraordinary dulness who does not respond to the exhilaration of this chapter. It is a chapter filled with the march and music of triumph. The dominant notes are "light" and "glory." The prophet sees in raptured vision the victory of the good cause, darkness gone, enemies turned to friends, the flocks of Kedar, the ships of Tarshish, the sons of strangers, flocking to the divine standard, kings and peoples won to the service of justice and mercy, the day of small things become the day of great things, and by the throne of God and in the affairs of men, righteousness and truth meeting, no more to part. It is a chapter which thrills the heart to bear; it turns the wailing of the despondent into songs of rejoicing, and the tears of the defeated into smiles of hope.

"A little one shall become a thousand." How often have the pioneers of a Truth, a Cause, a Movement, cheered themselves amid their difficulties by this promise. The Truth which the world will not have, struggling for place and recognition, the Cause which wins its way so slowly that in a generation it seems to make no progress, the Movement which aims to do so much and accomplishes so little—Truth, Cause, Movement despised of men by reason of their small following—what hope, inspiration, and new courage their disciples have found in these words, "A little one shall become a thousand." It is easy to be buoyant, gay, and confident, when we march along with the majority, but to stand bravely with the minority of a minority still to believe in the victory of the good cause when vast world-forces seem to be arrayed against it, this is the trial of faith and manhood. The Reformers of all lands and times have had to pit themselves against powers that appeared invincible and positions that frowned impregnable. Every truth which has lifted the race onward has had to fight sore and long for its very existence, with only a handful of "fanatics," as men called them, for its friends. Yet often defeated, often betrayed, these fanatics have summoned heart and resolve again, sustained by the hope, "A little one shall become a thousand."

All history happily declares that it is not bulk and bigness which finally prevail among life's contending forces, but spirit, faith, and truth. Some Goliath with shining armour and ponderous weapon may thunder and threaten until the welkin rings with his voice and the earth shakes beneath his tread, but the victory is to the stripling with nothing but a sling and five smooth stones from the brook. Babylon, Nineveh, Carthage, Rome, the mighty and majestic cities of the world, may seem on the surface to be the great, moving forces in the history of the human race, but it turns out that their sway and influence is as nothing compared with that of smaller cities, Jerusalem, Athens, Florence, Geneva. What does imperial Babylon count for to-day? Nothing, absolutely nothing. Her only interest for men is in her dust heaps. But the least of all cities, Athens, lords it still over men's minds. Carthage, with all her wealth, palaces, fleets, commerce, has left nothing behind, not a deed of heroism, not a noble saying, not the memory of any teacher by which she might be immortalised, but Jerusalem, though in ruins, is a greater power in the world to-day than ever. Her prophets, singers, teachers, heroes, have given her an imperishable influence. "The little one has become a thousand." And it may be questioned whether Rome itself has ever touched the thought of Europe with such quickening energy as the cities of Dante and Calvin.

It is with thoughts like these that we, the disciples of Liberal Christianity, cheer and strengthen one another when confronted by the facts of present failure and lack of numbers. It is true we find it hard work to hold our own. The great forces of orthodoxy, proud and powerful hierarchies, wealthy and popular Free Church Federations, the great bulk of the church-going people of Europe, will have nothing to do with us, and would gladly assist at our funeral. Our churches are not crowded, we have no popularity with the masses, it is only a small company here and there we can gather to hear our message, we have no compact, organised Church Union, and the Truth and Cause to which we have given ourselves seem to make no progress. But although "cast down we are not destroyed."

"They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three."

The race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong. Majorities are no test of truth. It may not be in our time that a little one shall become a thousand, but whenever that day comes it will be partly the fruit of our fidelity and labour.

Do not mistake me. We are not to be *content* that Truth should be in a minority. I have noticed a deplorable attitude among some of the adherents of our cause, namely a certain pride in its small numbers as indicating a select circle, a certain contempt of the crowd, as if that meant vulgarity, never conceiving that if truth be truth no man ought to be content with less than its world-wide dominion. So I do not say that numbers, size, mass, popularity, have no value.

On the contrary. A great deal of a good thing is more precious than a little. The full grown oak of the pasture is worth more to the world than the oak sapling. The noon-day sun flooding all the land with light is better than the glimmering dawn. We ought to be eager for the growth of the good cause. Bulk is no proof of the best, yet we are faithless souls if we do not passionately believe that this time must come when the Best shall be universal. The victory of truth is what we labour for—that the little one may become a thousand.

A little one at the present moment is the Liberal Protestant movement in Europe. So small is it that some of our friends find it hard to realise that there is such a thing at all. But the International Congress of Liberal thinkers and workers established in 1901, and which has held meetings in London and Amsterdam, and now holds its third session in Geneva, is making us aware that we have fellow-workers and sympathisers in many lands, and that they are a greater number than we had supposed. They do not call themselves Unitarian, and their point of departure from Evangelical Protestantism has not been, except in Hungary, the doctrine of the Trinity. They have been influenced more by Biblical criticism, by the passion for liberty, and by ethical and humanitarian considerations. Theological argument has had less to do with it than in England. But the result is the same; they and we have come to the same conclusions, and the account of Liberal Protestantism given by Professor Jean Réville in his recent and valuable essay might stand for an account of English and American Unitarianism.

And to-day we meet in Geneva! It is an unique, startling, and in some respects, dramatic event. In no city of the world could our meeting be more indicative of the change that is going on in human thought. In this city Calvin gave to the Augustinian theology a new lease of life. His powerful genius impressed it upon nearly all the reformed churches. It took his name, and Calvinism dominated the most energetic section of the Protestant world. And to-day Calvinism in Calvin's own city is a negligible quantity. From the pulpit of the cathedral where he preached, Dr. Minot Savage is to speak to us of a Truth and a Cause which to Calvin would have been detestable. Truly Servetus might say, "I am at last avenged." Our meeting in Geneva is enough to make Calvin turn in his grave. Yet if he were alive now, I do not believe that Calvin would be a Calvinist, at least he would not be a Calvinist of the 16th century. He would as surely respond to the highest moral and intellectual influences of the time as he did to those of his day and generation. For about the greatest minds there is ever fresh receptiveness. And let us remember that Calvin, in spite of his terrible theology, against which we have waged so fierce and not unsuccessful a fight, was one of Europe's greatest minds, a man of keenest mental vigour, of noblest purity, of strongest will, and toughest moral fibre. For 25 years Calvin was dictator in Geneva, and he made it as a city set on a hill. It was the moral capital of one-half Christendom and the great frontier fortress against the incursions of Rome. Happily the attempt of Calvin and his followers to bind Calvinism for ever on the Protestant Churches has everywhere broken down. It could not but be so. Forces of many kinds have mitigated the severities of Calvinistic theology, and have undermined the Calvinistic view of God, man, and the universe. The rise of science, the acquisition of political power by the masses of the people, the new social aspects of the age, the new methods of interpretation, the larger historical knowledge, have so touched the thought of the world, that now in Calvinistic churches a doctrine is preached at which Calvin would have shuddered. The whole point of view has been altered. The Reformation of the 16th century was a protest against finality; it would have been strange if finality had been its vault. It was the first great effect of the intellectual revival known as the Renaissance, or the re-birth of learning. But when the reformers undertook the task of constructing a theology for the churches, the intellectual revolution was incomplete—it is not yet complete—and while they made immense and salutary changes in the dogmas of the Church, chiefly by appealing from the authority of the Pope to the authority of the

Bible, theirs was still the method of authority, of an external visible authority, and not simply the spiritual authority of reason and conscience. Their work was necessarily of a provisional nature. Indeed, all work of this kind is never but for a time. It has to be done over again when any great changes take place in the intellectual character of Christendom. It is being done over again to-day. The subjects to be discussed at this Conference are a sign that a New Reformation is in progress.

It has lately been my privilege to visit some of the higher Alpine valleys, where the white peaks are clear as crystal, where the glaciers gather in their native home, where "the rocky summits, split and rent, form turret, dome or battlement," and where the walls of a lost Eden or a future Paradise could scarcely be more beautiful than those ramparts of snow and ice gleaming like silver shields in the sun. Yet not more than one hundred years ago these glorious scenes, inexpressible in their grandeur and simplicity, were almost unknown, almost inaccessible. A rough footpath led the woodman or the goatherd from one rude collection of chalets to another, and only an adventurous spirit from the outside, and at rare intervals, found his way into this inner shrine of nature's beauty. The inhabitants themselves seemed to have no appreciation of the glorious vision they looked upon every day. But the growing spirit of delight in Nature's grander aspects, which in the 19th century enlarged human life like a new sense, sent an increasing number of worshippers to the heights and valleys, in spite of poor accommodation, scanty fare, and ill kept paths. Presently a mule track followed the footpath, and as the travellers multiplied a carriage road followed the mule track; and finally a mountain railroad, a wonderful triumph of engineering skill, opened the way to thousands of limited means, making the loveliness, wonder, and delight of the great Alps a possession for the many, a treasure-house, with open door for all who chose to enter.

Which things are a parable. The great, simple, beautiful truths of Religion which tower up like Alpine heights, were first of all to men like these unknown, inaccessible mountain valleys and dazzling peaks. None breathed their diviner air; none dreamed of their beauty. But an adventurous spirit here and there, some bold inquirer, some explorer, some Saussure or Whymper, some strong soul seeking better things, pushed his way a little up the valley, and then another took up the task and made a further advance, until at last one more daring than the rest, a Channing, an Emerson, a Parker, or a Priestley, and a Martineau, or a Socinus, or a Harnack, reached a height where a wide and wondrous prospect of truth opened itself to view. Yet it was long before the journey then taken to the grand simplicities of religion and to its universal things, by a few, attracted many followers. Some were too timid, and some too Conservative in habit, and some mocked at the idea of their being anything finer and better and lovelier than their own limited view in the dusty plain. And when the travellers came back and wished to lead others to those heavenly peaks, some were imprisoned, and some were stoned, and some were crucified. Yet the journey having once been made, its charm for the human spirit became irresistible. Others followed; the solitary footpath has become a wide and beaten track, and now whole churches breathe the air of those lofty, simple, invigorating, universal truths, once known only to a few, and rejoice in the far-reaching landscape open to every seeking soul. The great, majestic, Alpine truths of Religion, the things for which we stand, and which lift themselves up like the mountains into the clear heavens are come at slowly. Only after long, long waiting do they begin to be appreciated. The company of their lovers is now to-day but a little one. Nevertheless, we wait in sure and certain hope of a day when the little one shall become a thousand.

We have no heavenly life in us, nor fitness for it, unless it gives meaning, richness, glory, and the joy of promise to the earth.—*John Hamilton Thom.*

Motherhood!

From an address by President Roosevelt.

In the last analysis the welfare of the State depends absolutely upon whether or not the average family, the average man and woman and their children, represent the kind of citizenship fit for the foundation of a great nation; and, if we fail to appreciate this, we fail to appreciate the root morality upon which all healthy civilisation is based.

. . . . . .

No ordinary work done by a man is either as hard or as responsible as the work of a woman who is bringing up a family of small children; for upon her time and strength demands are made not only every hour of the day, but often every hour of the night. She may have to get up night after night to take care of a sick child, and yet must by day continue to do all her household duties as well; and, if the family means are scant, she must usually enjoy even her rare holidays taking her whole brood of children with her. Above all, our sympathy and regard are due to the struggling wives among those whom Abraham Lincoln called the plain people, and whom he so loved and trusted; for the lives of these women are often led on the lonely heights of quiet, self-sacrificing heroism.

Just as the happiest and most honourable and most useful task that can be set any man is to earn enough for the support of his wife and family, for the bringing up and starting in life of his children, so the most important, the most honourable and desirable task which can be set any woman is to be a good and wise mother in a home marked by self-respect and mutual forbearance, by willingness to perform duty, and by refusal to sink into self-indulgence or avoid that which entails effort and self-sacrifice.

Into the woman's keeping is committed the destiny of the generations to come after us. In bringing up your children, you mothers must remember that, while it is essential to be loving and tender, it is no less essential to be wise and firm. Foolishness and affection must not be treated as interchangeable terms, and, besides training your sons and daughters in the softer and milder virtues, you must seek to give them those stern and hardy qualities which in after life they will surely need. Some children will go wrong in spite of the best training, and some will go right even when their surroundings are most unfortunate. Nevertheless, an immense amount depends upon the family training. If you mothers, through weakness, bring up your sons to be selfish and to think only of themselves, you will be responsible for much sadness among the women who are to be their wives in the future. If you let your daughters grow up idle, perhaps under the mistaken impression that, as you yourselves have had to work hard, they shall know only enjoyment, you are preparing them to be useless to others and burdens to themselves.

Teach boys and girls alike that they are not to look forward to lives spent in avoiding difficulties, but to lives spent in overcoming difficulties. Teach them that work, for themselves and also for others, is not a curse, but a blessing. Seek to make them happy, to make them enjoy life, but seek also to make them face life with the steadfast resolution to wrest success from labour and adversity, and to do their whole duty before God and to man. Surely she who can thus train her sons and her daughters is thrice fortunate among women.

. . . . . .

To sum up, then, the whole matter is simple enough. If either a race or an individual prefers the pleasure of mere effortless ease, of self-indulgence, to the infinitely deeper, the infinitely higher pleasures that come to those who know the toil and the weariness, but also the joy, of hard duty well done, why, that race or that individual must inevitably in the end pay the penalty of leading a life both vapid and ignoble. No man and no woman really worthy of the name can care for a life spent solely or chiefly in the avoidance of risk and trouble and labour. Save in exceptional cases, the prizes worth having in life must be paid for, and the life worth living must be a life of work for a worthy end, and ordinarily of work more for others than for one's self!

The man is but a poor creature whose effort is not rather for the betterment of his wife and children than for himself; and, as for the mother, her very name stands for loving unselfishness and self-abnegation, and, in any society fit to exist, is fraught with associations which render it holy.

The woman's task is not easy,—no task worth doing is easy,—but in doing it, and when she has done it, there shall come to her the highest and holiest joy known to mankind; and, having done it, she shall have the reward prophesied in Scripture, for her husband and her children, yes, and all people who realize that her work lies at the foundation of all national happiness, and greatness, shall rise up and call her blessed.

All Aboard for Sleepy Land.

HAVE you heard about the children's train
That in the dim twilight
Takes them off to "Sleepy Land," and keeps
them there all night?
Oh, it is a very fast express, and goes, I
understand, [Land.
To Dreamytown, the capital of dear old Sleepy

Then its choo! choo! choo! the engine puffs,
Ding, dong! ding, dong! bell!
Ooo-oo-ooo the whistle blows
Over hill and dell. [hand.
Tickets! tickets! please hold them in your
A good night kiss will do as well
For fare to Sleepy Land.

Oh, the train stands in the station as the twilight's falling down,
Boys and girls and babies, too, on board for
Dreamytown;
And the engineer is ready for the starting-off
command,
The conductor calls out "All aboard!" and
we're off for Sleepy Land.

Now the station that we come to first is known
as Winky-boo,
But we can never stop there, for the train goes
rushing through;
But when we get to Noddyville the shadows
darker creep,
And winkey eyes and noddy heads are going
fast asleep.

Please keep the engine steady now, and don't
go quite so fast:
That was Slumber Junction there, the station
we just passed,
Please let the train go slower now and in the
station stand;
We're all arrived at Dreamytown, and safe in
Sleepy Land. *George W. Gage.*

The Progress of Religion.

YOUR and my religion and that of all our neighbours is but one stage in man's endeavours to find out the mystery of origin and destiny. We have not the whole of religion any more than we have the only country fit to live in; but, as all the countries contribute their part in the solving of the art, not yet reached, of administering absolute justice under liberty, so all human thoughts of God and destiny, rude thoughts many of them and very hideous some of them, have borne a part in the production of the best faith we now have. There is no perfect church nor any infallible creed. They are all very human and of very mixed virtues and vices. And especially what a reasoning man will bear in mind is that he is not to pronounce any anathema upon people who do not accept the judgment that some one personality in history, precious to him by tradition, is the perfect, sinless, omniscient man. There is no evidence in existence which can tell us enough about any historical person to assure us that he was incapable of error or mistake.

Human progress is not made by absolutely unerring men in Church or State. It is made by each man doing the best that is in him, after his light, and, the more earnestly he does it, the more his credit; and the great laws guiding evolution shape what he does into its brick in the mighty edifice of truth, goodness, and beauty, all of us being bricks more or less conspicuous. There are differences in men, differences of power, of opportunity, of consecration; but the mightiest intellect and heart that ever was is, after all, only a small contributor to what we call humanity's enlightenment. No one man has made England. No ten, no hundred men, pick them as you will. A multitude of faithful men and women, the most of them obscure, with no place on the scroll of fame, have combined to give us as much of liberty and civic righteousness as we possess. And sometimes from the bottom of the social heap comes the hint of national betterment and moral obligation which the foremost statesmen were too timid to express.

The Geneva Congress.

AUGUST 28-31, 1905.

Extracts from the Inaugural Address by Professor Montet, President of the Congress, Dean of the Faculty of Theology, University of Geneva.

IT was at Boston, the centre of Liberal Protestantism in the United States, that on the 25th of May, 1900, at the suggestion of the American Unitarian Association, an International Council was organised for the purpose of drawing into closer fellowship all Liberal Christians and all free religious thinkers.

In the statutes of that Council it is stated that "The object of this council shall be to open communication with those in all lands who are striving to unite pure religion and perfect liberty, and to increase fellowship and co-operation among them."

The Council, thus constituted in principle at the meeting of the Boston Unitarians in 1900, held its first General Assembly in London the following year.

On that occasion an inventory, so to speak, was drawn up, of all adherents to the liberal religious movement throughout the world.

Liberal Christians found that they were everywhere represented, and that their associations in every land professed the same liberal faith, were animated by the same spirit, and practised the same religion.

By means of this survey, they were able to render account of their strength, strength that has grown out of the power of an idea, out of the principle of liberal and evangelical Christianity.

The second International Congress was held at Amsterdam in 1903. The salient features of that Assembly were, at once, the profoundly liberal Christian spirit infused into all its deliberations and the religious influence which it has not ceased to exert. The liberal religious idea, which had been solemnly affirmed and proclaimed in London in 1901, was, on the occasion of the Amsterdam Congress, if I may be allowed a simile, more deeply mined and excavated.

The Geneva Congress has the same aims in view as its predecessors. It too will strengthen our grasp on and deepen our knowledge of this same religious idea, but we hope it will do still more, that it will contribute to the consolidation of the liberal religious brotherhood, to its practical development and to its progress in the domain of effective service.

Freedom of thought in religious matters will be strengthened by this Congress.

The need of a Christianity, at once vital and broad is felt more and more. So evident is this, that one of the contributors to the forthcoming discussion proposes to speak on the present opportunity of drawing up a Declaration of Liberal Christian Faith. In the depths of many souls, both in Europe and America, and even beyond the two continents, there is a profoundly felt need of faith, but of unshackled faith.

These souls are essentially religious, they cannot dispense with faith in God. His Messengers on earth from Moses to Jesus and from Jesus to the Witnesses to religious truth in all lands at the present time, seem to them not only as necessary as the greatest social benefactors, but appear to them to be the very levers of humanity. In these souls the religious need,—so deep and sincere and which so urgently calls for satisfaction—is intimately allied with the demand for liberty. They cannot conceive of true Christianity except in the spirit of perfect freedom. They regard the dogmatic formulæ deemed so necessary for the expression of our faith, as of secondary and relative importance; but they consider religious liberty as absolutely indispensable. A form of Christianity however remarkable, which should not free itself from all ecclesiastical and confessional tyranny, would seem to them for this very reason incomplete and imperfect. To them so far as religion is concerned there are but two ways, the broad way of liberal Christianity, and the narrow way of a Christianity that is bound by the chains of the past, by tradition, by inflexible creeds, by ecclesiastical prescription. They however have made up their mind as to the way they will take—they will espouse the cause of Liberal Evengelical Christianity, they will proclaim the liberal religious idea.

Our liberalism in religion has no special

Troisième Congrès International du Christianisme Libéral et Progressif,

Genève,

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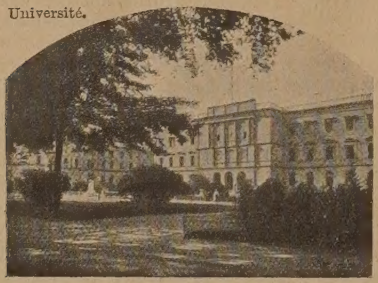
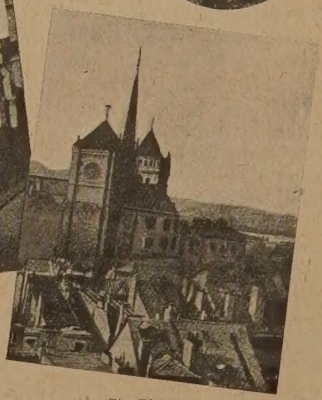


Université.

Monument Michel Servet

Chappelle des Macchabées.



St—Pierre.

label. The deliberations of our International Councils cover the widest field of religious research possible, without overstepping the religious domain. To become a member of these Councils implies neither the acceptance of any dogmatic creed, nor membership in any particular Church. Allow me, as we are in Geneva and in a French-speaking country, to confirm the important statement I have just made by bringing beneath your notice two—equally illustrious examples. I shall not select them from among those who are still with us, nor from the members of this Assembly, an assembly which, however, might furnish me with eloquent examples enough. I prefer to take them from amongst the dead, our deeply regretted dead.

In my opinion, two religious thinkers, of the same spiritual calibre, but differing in their tendencies, in their religious characters, and in their intellectual nature, preside, so to speak, over our deliberations in this Hall

and in this University where both of them once spoke, and taught. The former is Auguste Bouvier, the latter is Auguste Sabatier. These two theologians were, at a time still not far removed from our own, the leaders and inspirers of free religious thought in French-speaking countries. They represented in the heart of liberal Christianity two different tendencies; they formulated diverse systems of dogma; but the method they adopted, the spirit with which they were animated, and the religion they professed and lived were the same, viz:—the scientific method, the broad Christian spirit; the religion of Jesus.

* * * * * *

Now, it is just this liberty of thought to which we lay claim, it is just this free and vital faith which we profess, it is this religion which is the rallying point of our International Congress, which has drawn to us not only the representatives of different Christian Churches (Protestant and Catholic) but also those of Jewish and Hindoo Theistic liberal religious thought.

Our friends, the "Brahmo-Somaj," were the first to respond to our invitation. They were at the London Congress, they were at Amsterdam, and to-day they are with us. They are to us, if I may employ the familiar expression, old acquaintances.

As to the representatives of broad and progressive Catholicism and broad and progresthem a hearty welcome. You are welsive Hebrewism, we are happy to give come amongst us dear brethren, you and we are all thinkers and workers in the vast field of religious thought and practice where all religions grow and develop under the eye of our Heavenly Father. You have evidently your place here, by our side, for the same free and religious spirit which animates us and inspires us to work, animates and inspires you.

This does not mean that we are in little a kind of parliament of religions. All the monotheistic Faiths, even, are not yet represented. Islam has not sent a delegate of that liberal religion which exists as truly amongst its adherents as amongst us. Such a representative would not have been out of place in our Assembly. When in 1698 that oriental scholar Marracci published his famous refutation of the Koran, which besides was, so to speak, the starting point of the rehabilitation of Mahomet in Christendom, it was Protestantism that the member of the Order of the Mother of God attacked under the form of Islamism. That narrow, and militant Catholic, purposely confounded, in his refutation, Mahommedanism and Protestantism, and it was this that called forth in Holland and elsewhere the protestations of the Reformers, showing that Mohammedan Unitarianism and Christian Unitarianism are not so alien the one to the other as might be imagined. As the Rev. James Harwood, one of the members of this Assembly, wrote a short time ago ("A Message to Mohammedans, p. 16"). "In the sublime doctrine of the unity of God, the Mohammedan and the Unitarian are at one."

We are not a parliament of religions, I say. But we are a parliament of liberalism in matters of religion, and on account of this, the liberal religious idea will take deeper root as the result of this Geneva Congress.

Our devoted secretary, the Rev. Ch. Wendte, will show you in his report the progress that has been made in this respect since the Amsterdam Congress. He will tell you of the liberal religious publications which have been scattered throughout Europe and America; he will speak to you of the liberal press, of lectures which pastors and theologians of our way of thinking, such as: Carpenter, Harnack, Pfleiderer, Réville, Wagner, and others, have delivered in Europe and America. He will also give you information on the numerous existing liberal religious associations and of the relationships between them.—Unitarian Associations in England, in the United States, and in Hungary; the Liberal Delegation in France; the Liberal Protestant Union in Alsace-Lorraine; the "Protestantenverein" in Germany; the "Protestantenbond" in Holland; the Swiss Association of Liberal Christians, etc. And he will finally draw your attention to a remarkable fact the long journey of nine months, which may well be described as apostolic, of the Rev. Ch. Hargrove, to Australia and the Pacific Isles, during which that distinguished representative of English Unitarianism preached the good news of the Gospel of Jesus.

Ladies and Gentlemen, those who will speak to you to-day will give you an exact account of the condition and prospects of Liberal religion in the different countries they represent, and will point out the progress it has made for the last two years.

The liberal religious idea will not only take deeper and firmer hold as the result of our Congress, but our organisation will be developed and strengthened. We shall aim at establishing a stronger and more intimate federation in the Churches, and amongst free religious associations; we shall seek for ways and means not only of disseminating our principles, and our conception of a broad and progressive religion, but of uniting, in the bonds of an ever more vital fellowship, all religious men who are in sympathy with our aims. Our General Secretary, the Rev. Ch. Wendte, will speak to you in his report of plans which have been submitted for our consideration, plans for the creation of a central fund, the institution in Europe of a permanent central agency, the publication of an International Review, etc. The decisions you will come to on these matters will be such as you judge most opportune, most useful, and most in harmony with our principles.

What fills me with pleasure, ladies and gentlemen, as I look upon this assembly, what not only fills me with pleasure, but lifts my heart up in devout thankfulness to God, is this spectacle of the union in common religious fellowship of so many eminent men, belonging to different Churches and even different religions, each having his individual theological opinion, belief, conviction, but all united by the same religious idea, that of the adoration of our Heavenly Father.

My only regret is the absence of several of our members, and this regret is none the less, that circumstances alone have hindered them from being with us. I refer specially to Professor Harnack, of Berlin; the Ven. Fremantle, Dean of Ripon; the Rev. P. Eliot, of Boston; Dean Jalabert, of Paris, and Baron F. de Schickler, both of them so devoted to our cause in France; our colleague, Professor Bonet-Maury, of Paris; our friend, M. Paul Sabatier, author of a remarkable book on St. Francis of Assisi; the Ven. Kambli, Dean of St. Gall; that ardent champion of Liberal Religion, Paster Bost, of Brussels, who has been kept from joining us by illness.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before declaring the Congress open, I desire solemnly to affirm that we are believers. It is because we have a profound faith in the truth of the cause of religion, that we defend it, and that we have worked with such zeal in preparing for this Congress. It is because we are men of faith that success has crowned our efforts. It is because we are men of faith that our deliberations will be fruitful in results. Gentlemen, we shall work with joy and enthusiasm, for we can take up in all sincerity the words of the Apostle, and say, "I believe, therefore have I spoken."

Ladies and Gentlemen, I now declare the third International Congress of Liberal and Progressive Christians open.

Dr. Minot Savage's Congress Sermon.

One of the most striking events of the Congress was the sermon preached by Dr. Minot Savage, of New York, in the Cathedral—Calvin's own church and from Calvin's own pulpit! The sermon was entirely worthy of the occasion and the speaker. It was a very fine exposition of "The Eternal Essence and the changing forms of religion. It was eagerly listened to by a large congregation, on whom it made a deep impression. We must content ourselves with giving two or three extracts, referring our readers to the full and admirable report which appeared in the *Inquirer* of September 9th.

What is Religion?

Religion is the attempt to get into right relation with God. Men have always had their thoughts about God, their theories about themselves, their thoughts and theories as to the actual relations existing between themselves and God; their ideals as to what those relations ought to be, and the one peculiar aim and end of religion has been to get into right relations with God. This is true not only of Christianity, not only of Mohammedanism, not only of any one of those religions, it is true of them all. And so, in some certain profound sense, there has never been, from the beginning of the world, and there never can be until the end, more than one religion. There have been a thousand religions

and ten thousand theologies, but one religion, from the Indian placing a tobacco leaf upon a stump of a tree and praying to the spirit that he imagined to inhabit the place, up to the temple at Jerusalem and St. Peter's at Rome. In the finest and highest religious service of the world there has been underlying it only this one single simple effort and aim to get into right relations with God. Suppose we could succeed in that effort!

Who are the Civilised?

Does it ever occur to you that we are civilised just to the extent and no more that we are religious? It is not the telegraph, or the telephone, or the railway, or the automobile, or the attempt to fly in the air, or the ships that cover the sea: it is not the exploration, not the discoveries, not the control of the natural forces of the world, that make men civilised. It is not literature, it is not science, it is not music, it is not art, that make the world good. Herbert Spencer—and he is not a man to be prejudiced, at least on this side of the question—in the last book that he published before his death, tells us that the intellectualisation of the world is not necessarily accompanied by its moralisation. The educated, intelligent man may be only the keener, sharper scoundrel. He is not necessarily good because he has learned literature and art and music. These things do not necessarily make men civilised. They express the thought, the feeling, the life, of the age. They do not necessarily lift it or lead it forward. Ancient Athens and Italy at the finest artistic period of its career—the period of the Renaissance—teach us the truth that art and literature and music, oratory and painting, may be accompanied by inexpressible personal and social corruption.

What is it that makes men better? It is simply the development of love, of sympathy, of the sense of justice, of the willingness to co-operate and be brothers; it is helpfulness and care; it is these spiritual qualities, these religious virtues, that make men and women civilised, that lift up and lead on mankind. Why am I any better because instead of being able to be heard fifty yards away I can speak from Geneva to Paris, from Paris to London, from New York to Chicago? The distance my voice may be heard is not so important as the kind of man I am when I speak, and what I have to say.

When my father was born, in 1794, no man that lived could travel any faster than Abraham could. All these marvellous changes have come since that day. But why should I ride at the rate of fifty miles an hour instead of four, or six, or ten? It is a great convenience, but I am not necessarily a better man, and the errands on which I go may not of necessity be any more kindly, just, or humane. It is what we *are*, not what we can do, or how rapidly, or how astonishingly we can do it, that makes us civilised.

The one thing, then, in all the world of chiefest importance to us is this kind of religion of which I am speaking: getting into right relations with God and with our fellow men. This is the hope of the world.

Our Duty to the Church.

Let me suggest what may seem a commonplace, and yet to me it is especially important. It is our duty to become members of some church, some religious organisation, for the sake of the church and the world. If you can help men better single-handed and alone, well; but we have found out in every other department of life that we cannot do as much alone as we can through organisation. Organise, then, for the sake of God and humanity. What church shall you join? Join that church which will best answer to your ideals, which best answers to your place; but remember that you are to keep your eyes and your heart open for any new truth that may come to you, and be ready to listen and to come out like Abraham, though you may not know where you are going; going out at the call of what you may believe to be the voice of God.

Encouragement.

We are sometimes discouraged that the world seems to progress so slowly. God does not appear to be in a hurry, but it does advance. I was trained in the idea that the world was near its end, that the morning and noon were passed; that we were well on toward the evening twilight, and that we might soon expect the end,

to be followed by the day of judgment; but we have learned in this modern time that hardly as yet has the sun risen. It is early morning, and humanity instead of being old and decrepit, and hastening to its doom, is in its infancy. Humanity is the child Hercules strangling some of the serpents that hiss round its cradle; but the great labours that are to cleanse and purify the world are still ahead of it.

Look up and on, then, with hope and cheer. It is possible for us as individuals to climb up out of the animal into heart and brain, and live as sons and daughters of God! It is possible for the race to achieve this same result, and to conquer, control, and glorify the world.

I see a time when all the evils of the past shall be forgotten, remembered only in contrast with the glory that has been attained, universal peace, universal brotherhood, the lines between nations blotted out in the intermingling of peoples everywhere; freedom and joy, all natural wants supplied, the earth become a great garden, the world controlled and finished by perfecting the religious thought and the religious life. And this life I see only as a vestibule, leading to that low, dark doorway, through which we pass only to emerge into another room of the eternal Father's house, where the sun shall no more go down.

Father, we thank Thee for the light that has come to us, for the hope that cheers, for the consecration that may be ours; may we be glad that we can co-operate with Thee for the saving of the world. Amen.

Impressions of the Congress.

THERE were so many good things to hear and to see that we imagine no one can have been disappointed by his visit to Geneva. We esteemed it a privilege to meet in a city whose influence upon the history of the world we were told at the outset it was impossible even to-day to estimate, and a privilege also to see so many famous scholars gathered together in one place. Everyone must have been gratified by the courtesy and consideration shown by our Genevese hosts and by the Genevese generally. From the smallest to the greatest we experienced nothing but kindness. We were especially grateful for the attention and trouble taken by Professor R. Mobbs, an Englishman by birth, who acted as English secretary to the President and as guide to parties of the visitors. The local Committee took pity on our insular frailties and provided, where possible, translations and synopses of the papers delivered in languages other than our own. The readers of the SEED SOWER will know that the Swiss are so free and so fearless of the expression of opinion that we were allowed to worship and to listen to the exposition of our beliefs in the cathedral. Other experiences abroad sometimes cause us to indulge in Homeric laughter over the Englishman's vain boast of liberty—poor fellow, with his tongue free, it is true, but his feet bound, confronted at every turn in pleasant country lanes with "Trespassers will be prosecuted." No wonder when we see boards bearing these words that we sigh for liberty to ramble as we will in German woods or on Swiss mountains. We visited the places of interest in Geneva, and did not neglect to go to Ferney, where is the church "Voltaire erected to God." Even though it was not part of the prescribed programme, as the visit to the shrine of our noble Servetus was, it was right that most of us who were attending a Council of Liberal Thinkers should make a pilgrimage to the home of the man who "conveyed to his generation in a multitude of forms the consciousness at once of the power and the rights of human intelligence" (John Morley). We saw the mountains—enough to take one's breath away and make him fall down in wonder.

But to come to the papers delivered. We return to our country with increased hope, and we say to those who were not present, we have every reason to be courageous, for scholars of European reputation are heart and soul with us. We cannot be too emphatic in asserting this: we still count giants among us: we have brethren of one mind with us, not only in America and Hungary, but in many lands: and they occupy professorial chairs in continental universities and are delivering lectures to those who will be the preachers and teachers of their people. We were occasionally surprised at the sympathy

of their thought with our own: so close was it that we could almost imagine they were in our English line of development. The forward wings in the Reformed Church of Holland, in the Calvinistic Church of Switzerland, in the Unitarian Church of Hungary, in Reformed Judaism, and in English Unitarianism, are united in thought and purpose. As Professor Montet said—if those present could not say they were in little a kind of Parliament of religions, at least they were a Parliament of liberalism in matters of religion. They were all one, said Dr. Althers, the President of the Swiss Free Christian Union in the confession of faith—"God our Father: all men His children, and brethren: Jesus our Leader: salvation by character: the unlimited progress of mankind upwards and onwards for ever."

The moment when the Conference reached its highest pitch of enthusiasm was when the declaration of peace between Russia and Japan was announced by the President. The whole audience rose spontaneously and cheered. Telegrams of congratulation were sent to the Czar, the Mikado, and President Roosevelt. In the evening the members willingly gave up the pleasures of social intercourse at the *conversazione* to listen to speeches which were worth hearing and remembering. Mr. Edwin Mead, an American, rejoiced that their President had been at the head of the movement for peace, for some of them feared that there was an inclination on the part of their countrymen to follow the old-world method of having large armaments, and Pastor Schönholzer, a fine man to behold, made excellent use of the simile that as four mighty rivers took their rise in St. Gotthardt and flowed through different countries, so all men were born in the heart of God and should dwell together in peace and bless many peoples. Pasteur Charles Wagner, author of "The Simple Life," which has had a remarkable sale, said in a telling address that it should be an encouragement to them all to know that President Roosevelt, who had done most to bring about the peace, was a man of "simple" and "strenuous" life. He was a good father, a true citizen, a faithful friend, and had many a homely virtue. If such a man could do this thing, they might take heart and toil on without despair.

Some of us were not unaware of weaknesses in the meetings. The chief weakness was that the International Council is still young, and the members do not at present know one another so well as is desirable. Almost all the readers of papers felt it their duty to emphasize that they stood for free liberal undogmatic religion. They have to meet so much opposition to this principle at home that they seemed to have forgotten that it was commonplace to those present, and time was spent in enlarging upon it which might have been better devoted to giving us some fresh helpful thought, of which the speakers were quite capable. The principle for which the Council stands was so much to the front that some of the best remarks came in as asides. It would be a good thing if this principle were in future mentioned by the President in his opening remarks and then tabooed.

Again, and partly as a consequence of this weakness, too much time was given to history to the exclusion of prophecy. The progress liberal religion has made in various countries would surely be best supplied in printed unspoken reports, so that time might be allowed to the representatives to speak a living word with a living voice, instead of giving a record of the advance made during the previous two years, which at the rate thought moves, is bound to be so small as scarcely to merit mention. It was necessary only to take up the programme to see that the note to be struck would be not "What can we do?" but "What we have done." Mr. Reville, Mr. Hocart, Mr. André, Professor Eerdmans, and Professor Boros must find it trying to have to deal with the same subjects every time, and we were glad to notice their inclination on this occasion to get away from them. The reports furnished at the Conferences that have been held will no doubt be ample for the next ten years, and we shall have more addresses like those given at the Conference in London by Dr. Drummond, Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Crothers, Mr. Wallas, and Mr. Wicksteed; and at this Conference by Mr. Hyacinthe Loyson and Mr. Tarrant.

Mr. Tarrant's paper on "The Relation of Liberal Religion to Social Reforms," was by

far the most practical delivered, and it is to be hoped sincerely that some definite action will be its outcome. Here is something that can be done, some good that may result from these gatherings beyond sympathy and union among ourselves. Many of us are anxious to do something to lead our countrymen to a better and simpler life, for the sake of our poorer brethren, and we cannot do anything effective unless there is union among us—a clear message to be delivered: a strong course of action to be taken. What can liberal religion do to uplift and help the masses? "If the crying need of Social Reform does not seriously affect Liberal Religion, kindling in it more and more the fires of a sacred passion, perish such liberalism from the face of the earth."

In the hope that this may not be lost sight of, I make no comments on the other papers or on the sermons, eloquent as they were, though with very different kinds of eloquence.

ALFRED HALL.

Notes and Jottings.

The summer is over and gone. The minister has returned to his pulpit and the people to their pews, and the old habits have been resumed. It is good for both of them to look at the familiar routine of religious worship from a distance. Is it all that it should be as an inspiration and a public testimony for God and Christ and the things of the soul? Are there directions in which it can be improved? Does it need to be rescued from coldness and conventionality? Is it capable of wider influence either through novel methods, greater directness of appeal? It is possible to ask these questions and to seek for some practical answer to them without undervaluing our quiet traditional habits. But we have to consider in an increasing degree the people for whom religious habits are ceasing to exist, or who have never possessed them. The churches have hardly realized yet the tremendous importance of the problem which confronts them. It is not to be solved without courage and mental resource and sound judgment, and what we many venture to describe as an element of originality and spiritual daring.

Much gratitude is due from religious workers everywhere to the Bishop of Manchester for the success of the Mission at Blackpool. It was boldly conceived, admirably organised, and carried through on a full tide of popular sympathy and enthusiasm. Its distinctive feature was open-air preaching to the crowds of holiday-makers on the sands, and from all accounts many people listened and were impressed who could not have been reached in any other way. The addresses were earnest and practical, and both in phraseology and illustration, well suited to the people. They were also free from the elements of cant and false unction, which have tended to bring a good deal of open-air preaching into discredit. For the clergy of the Church of England an experiment of this kind may mean a great deal. It opens up an untrodden path of missionary enterprise, and it provides a golden way of escape into popular sympathies from the dangers of a splendid routine and an official religion.

At the close of the Mission Dr. Knox described it as the best holiday he had ever had. There was naturally some eagerness to gather his impressions. Had the work been successful? Had he any plans for the future? On those matters the Bishop was wisely reticent. He pointed out that it was far too soon to speak of "results." Evidently what he and his fellow-workers cared for was not the mere profession of conversion, but the changed life, which stood the test of time. As for the future, they had only touched the fringe of a great problem, they had come to close quarters with many difficulties, and much must be left to experience and prayerful consideration. What an excellent example this is for all mission preachers of self-effacement and modesty of statement, and at the same time how much truer it is to the real facts of religion than the exciting statistics of the penitent form.

General Booth has discovered the religious uses of the motor-car. Perhaps walking, staff in hand, sounds more apostolic, but for a man of over seventy years the car has its obvious advantages, and we are reminded that John

Wesley travelled on horseback or in a carriage. The recent gathering in the Albert Hall was a magnificent tribute to his energy and his undiminished popularity. We are not inclined to carp at the dramatic *mise-en-scène*, when the curtain was drawn and he was revealed in the now historic motor-car amid thunders of applause. The Salvation Army is nothing if not symbolic both in its language and its methods, and the General in a motor-car probably means much the same to his followers as the Pope borne on his chair of ivory and gold to the adoring crowds in St. Peter's. He is for the moment the symbol of a world-wide movement, which sends its messengers speeding forth to the ends of the earth on errands of rescue and mercy. And the motor-car, it illustrates the fact, which the Salvation Army has been quicker to recognize than some more venerable religious bodies, that nothing can be too modern or too secular for the uses of religion.

Writing a year ago we were able to announce the approaching advent of the New Hymnal. It is a matter of congratulation that it is ready for the autumn season. We have heard already of some congregations that are eager to adopt it, and we hope that many others will be quick to be wise. For it is a good book, and a cheap one. The musical edition has won golden opinions already from many people competent to judge. If it helps gradually to introduce greater uniformity of musical use, and at the same time develops musical taste, one of the chief aims of the promoters will be accomplished. For worship in the home, and the beautiful custom of singing hymns in the family on Sunday evening, it will be a great boon. We venture to advise parents very strongly to procure it and to use it with their children, even if it is not possible to introduce it at present in the worship of the church.

There are those who acquire the habit of helping others, of comforting, or adding cheerfulness and strength, wherever they go. To those who thus give much is given in return,—contentment, trust in God, confidence in their fellow-men, sweet hopes, peaceful memories.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

Astronomical Notes for October.

JUPITER, the largest planet in the solar system, is now the most conspicuous object in the sky. Situated near the group of the Pleiades, and above the bright star, Aldetaran, it rises just before seven o'clock in the middle of the month. Jupiter's period of revolution round the sun is twelve years, so that he passes through one of the constellations of the Zodiac in a year. He is now in Taurus, and next autumn he will be in Gemini, the most northerly constellation in the Zodiac. With a good opera-glass some of Jupiter's moons may be seen, on a clear night, as tiny points of light, close to the planet. Saturn and Mars are also visible, the latter being, early in October, at his lowest point on the ecliptic.

The Coming Church.

Let us have a church that dares imitate the heroism of Jesus, seek inspiration as he sought it, judge the past as he, act on the present like him, pray as he prayed, work as he wrought, live as he lived. Let our doctrines and our forms fit the soul as the limbs fit the body, growing out of it, growing with it. Let us have a church for the whole man, truth for the mind, good works for the hands, love for the heart; and, for the soul, that aspiring after perfection, that unfaltering faith in God which, like lightning in the clouds, shines brightest when elsewhere it is most dark.—*Theodore Parker.*

Every event which is going to happen to you next week, every coming event, is prepared for by your inmost thought and interest for months and years past. God's judgments are instantaneous, present, growing.—*W. H. Channing.*

It is a pitiable desecration of such a nature as ours to give it up to the world. Some baser thing might have been given without regret; but to bow down reason and conscience, to bind them to the clods of earth, to contract those faculties that spread themselves out beyond the world, even to infinity,—to contract them to worldly trifles,—it is pitiable, it is something to mourn and to weep over.—*Orville Dewey.*

News from the Field.

We observe, with pleasure, that the *Rev. H. Rawlings, M.A.*, has now taken up his work at *Hackney*, and every one will wish him success in his arduous and honourable task.

The *Rev. A. Thornhill, B.A.*, has begun his work at *Carlisle*, where a fine sphere is ready at his hands, and an earnest body of men and women are ready to help him. He also commands our good wishes for the development of his work in the northern field.

The *Rev. W. H. Burgess, B.A.*, and his wife have received a cordial welcome at the beginning of his work in Loughborough.

The *Rev. Chas. Roper, B.A.*, the successful worker at *Moss Side, Manchester*, where he has created and established a large and prosperous church with fine buildings and institutions, has received and accepted a call to the promising young congregation at *Kilburn, London*. He will be greatly missed in *Manchester*, where he has done a great work, but he will be a splendid addition to our forces in *London*, where the field is vast and the labourers few.

The Rev. E. I. Fripp, B.A., is leaving *Mansfield*, where he has ministered faithfully for many years, and at two different times, with real success, having decided to accept a call to *Clifton*, where he is sure to make himself felt as an influence for enlightenment, culture, and piety.

The announcement of the resignation of the *Rev. C. J. Sneath*, of Moseley, has come, with a great shock of surprise, upon the writer of these Notes. Mr. Sneath has long been a hard worker—he left the Established Church for conscientious reasons, and built up a Free Church, *Our Father's* Church, by his own zeal and devotion. If it is failing health or infirmity which has led to his resignation, he will have the sympathy of many who have honoured his devotion and zeal, or, if any other cause has led to it, he will be secure in the respect and goodwill of those who have seen and approved his work.

Moneyrea, Ireland, has again been setting us all a good example. A special service, to wipe off debt, etc., has been held, conducted by the *Rev. Miss Von. Petzfold*, and the splendid collection of £214 1s. 11d. was obtained. Many friends and helpers gathered—with a most cheering result.

The workers in our various congregations are in the tide of work once more. Ministers are in their places—toilers are back from holidays, and we can now look forward to time of strenuous labour crowned with Divine success.

Meanwhile the discussion about the *Unitarian Van*, of which we really know little, has been useful in stirring up the Missionary spirit, and making it evident that names must be used in no narrow and sectarian spirit, but must be interpreted in the light of the largest freedom and the widest spiritual development.

The Domestic Mission at *Willert Street, Manchester*, has had the co-operation of the Lord Mayor of the city, *Sir T. T. Shann*, in a bazaar got up by *Mr. Bishop* and his people, and has shewn the great interest in the poor folk of the Mission and their Minister in the proposed enlargement of their premises to carry on their growing work. The present buildings are overcrowded, and it speaks well for all concerned that they have met with such co-operation in their energetic work.

Great Hucklow has been greatly stirred up by the visitors to its "holiday home," and its ancient Chapel. It has had a splendid season, and for many months has been a sort of centre of Unitarian progressive life. It was a great sight to see a procession of Oddfellows—with flags and banners, headed by a number of Unitarian Ministers and Laymen—making their way to the Old Chapel, and crowding its pews and benches to listen to a sermon by the *Rev. R. S. Redfern*. The sermon was helpful and enlightening, and the gathered people would carry away a pleasant impression of the lofty faith which our people represent.

Very pleasingly the *Rev. W. Blazeby, B.A.*, has told the story of Stannington Chapel. Records like these are very valuable, and men like Mr. Blazeby are doing good service in making the dead past live again.

But that our present issue is sure to be full of the details of the International Conference at Geneva, it would have been pleasing to dwell upon some of its features in these Notes. As it is, it only need be said that it more than realized all that its promoters desired, and was full of that spirit which is destined to conquer the world.

All are rejoicing that the dreadful war in the East is at an end, and that a more peaceful spirit is manifesting itself throughout the world. This column of the SEED SOWER has always stood for "Peace on earth and goodwill to men."

The story of our losses by death is a more varied one this month. We note the passing away of the *Rev. J. Williams*, of *Nottingham*, once a faithful worker among us—*Robert Fielding*, of *Heaton Moor—Geo. Brothers*, of *Canterbury—A. T. Hibbert, J.P., of Hyde, Cheshire—R. H. Ireland*, of *Dunmurry*—and *Miss Jane Evans*, of *Carmarthen*—all good, devoted, and zealous members of our communion, who have left a good record behind them, and passed into the Eternal Presence, carrying their sheaves with them.

But now we move forward, pushing on to the work, and promise that lies before us.

SCRUTATOR.

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